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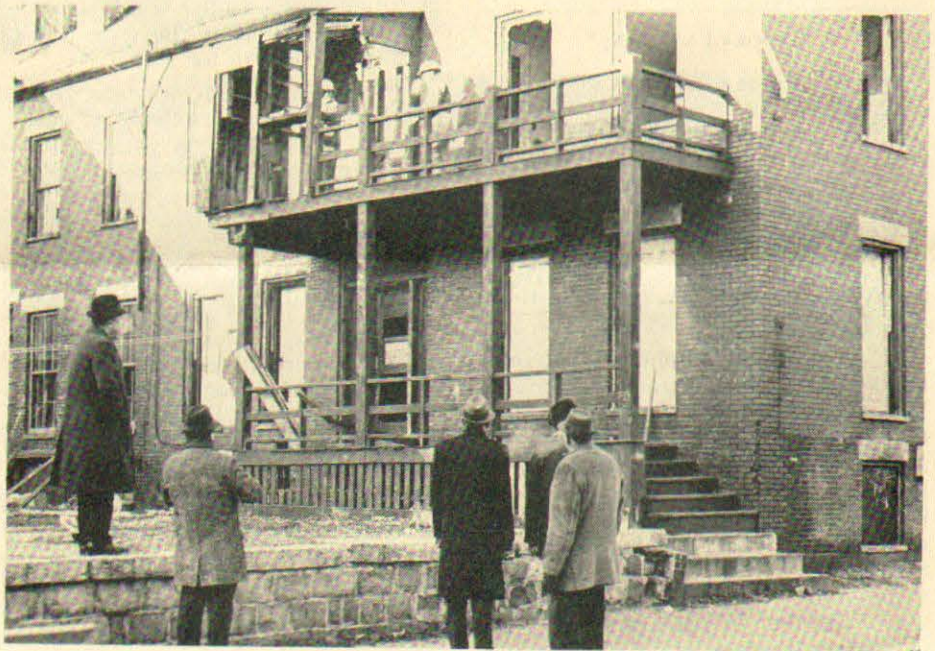
MUNJOY OBSERVER

Portland Public Library

VOL. 1 NO. 3

JANUARY, 1963

Demolition Moves Forward — —



City Manager Graham H. Watt, center (dark coat) and Portland Renewal officials watch demolition of first structure to come down in the Munjoy South Renewal Project — 22 Monument Street. (story on p. 2)

Editorially Speaking—

Neighborhood Pride Can Help

During the aftermath of World War II a change took place in American living habits. The migration to the suburbs became the trend; urban population decreased; undesirable influences enveloped our cities. Many of the former owner-occupants left, and there was an increase of absentee landlords. In some cases this made little or no difference in property standards; in other cases it was the beginning of property degeneration — the creeping cancer of blight.

The Munjoy Hill area felt the impact of this change — not so badly as most areas, but enough to make noticeable a downward trend.

At the completion of the Munjoy South Renewal Project this downward trend will have been arrested. New streets, new sidewalks, new trees, and new lighting will have helped to modernize the area. The legal requirements of standard housing will have eliminated the blight and restored the good. Property values will have regained their former stature.

There is one thing, however, which cannot be legislated, and it is upon this that the success or failure of the entire project depends. The most important factor in this, or in any other project, is the restoration of neighborhood pride.

Pride in one's neighborhood can be indicated in many ways. A bit of paint here, some boards and nails there can do much to improve a worn out fence. Some fertilizer and

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Marada F. Adams School



Profile
of
a
School

The modern school which serves also to house a Branch of the Portland Public Library — has become a focal point of the Munjoy Hill area. Its location at one time was the scene of clearance activities similar to the above photo. As the old makes way for new improvements, so time makes good use of the realized progress. The Munjoy-Observer is proud to feature the school, its faculty and activities in this issue. (See stories on pages 3 and 4)



A PRA Profile

(First of
a Series)

BROOKS EASTMAN,
Assistant PRA Director

There's a jolly, kindly man with a rolling, hearty laugh and merry brown eyes — who's the right hand of the Urban Renewal Program in Portland.

His activities cover the range of goings-on essential to the execution of each renewal project.

In 1956 — when renewal was relatively new in Portland — Brooks joined the staff of the then Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Authority. His talents for administration and for dealing effectively and kindly with people were soon recognized, and he has been a continuing mainstay of the renewal program throughout its growth. He is now the senior member in years of service and is assistant director. Howard U. Heller is director of the program.

Brooks' background of experience is ideally suited to his responsibilities, since he was employed for 13 years in the South Portland Housing Authority, rising to executive director before coming to the renewal position.

He is a real "Mainer" having grown up in the town of Lovell, graduated from Fryeburg Academy and later taught there; was graduated from Bowdoin College earning an AB degree in 1931.

Parents of five children ranging in age from 23 to 9 years, Brooks and his Bridgton-born wife, (the former Frances Webb) became grandparents six months ago when son, Kim, and his wife, Sandra, presented young Kevin Brooks to the Eastman heritage.

Other Eastman children are Joel, 23, a teacher in Glenn Falls High School; Sherry, 18, a student at Burdett Junior College; Mark, 17, a high school senior; and Quentin, 9, a third-grader.

Among extra curricula activities the Eastmans are prominent in the Cumberland County Recreation Council — and better square dance callers would be hard to find. The Eastmans have it.

SITE OFFICE OPENS

To Have Open House on Jan. 23

On January 9 the Munjoy-South Project Site Office at 200 Congress Street was open for business.

On January 23, the office and its staff will be "at home" to the public for a Coffee Party from 3 to 6 p.m. Save the date and plan to come in for a visit.

In the meantime, anyone with a question or problem is welcome daily. This is your headquarters for your use and we are here to help you.

Those on duty are Mrs. Ann Armstrong, relocation worker; Brooks Eastman, assistant PRA director; James Pleat, renewal specialist; Mrs. Beatrice Chapman, community relations and editor of the Munjoy Observer; Mrs. Helene Sparrow, administrative secretary; and Stuart Collins, maintenance supervisor.

Do come and get acquainted.

The telephone number is SP 4-6278.

Down They Come

The long-awaited demolition of dilapidated structures has started in Munjoy South.

Twenty-two properties are included in the current demolition contract which was awarded in December to the Sam Serota Company.

In addition to the structure at 22 Monument Street, the first to come down, the following are slated for removal in this first contract:

116, 127 Monument
16 and 25 Carey Lane
32 St. Lawrence Street
26, 28, 56, 64, 65 Adams
33 and 33a Newbury
53 rear, and 69, 75, 75a, 79, 81 Fore
27, 69, 71 Waterville

The majority of these are in the total clearance area and thus the cleared land will be used for redevelopment. Those in the rehabilitation area will provide space for a variety of uses. Some may be acquired by adjacent property owners for parking space, yards or gardens. Some areas will be used as locations for the moving of standard structures from the total clearance area. In any event, the removal of the dilapidated buildings will serve to halt blight and will automatically improve the surrounding neighborhood.

Housing Inspections Proceed

Following the first section of housing inspections carried out by the Portland Health Department's housing inspection division — orders have been issued describing deficiencies needing correction.

These notices were mailed shortly after the first Block Meeting for residents and property owners on Morning Street from Congress to Vesper.

"This is one of the best sections in the city which we have inspected and there are relatively few sub-standard structures," according to Gordon Martin, supervisor of the department.

"However, since inspections pertain only to minimum code standards, it is hoped that owners and tenants will wish to do many extra improvements which are desirable for upgrading the neighborhood and which may go far beyond the minimum standards."

Inspections are continuing in the areas of Munjoy, Beckett, Monument, Sheridan and Congress Streets. However, no one should wait at home for inspectors until receiving an advance notice by letter. Inspectors now working on these assignments are Joseph Oliver, Thomas Joyce, Lyle Noyes and Robert Pratt. All carry identification cards.

Among items ordered to be corrected in recently mailed notices are:

- Repair of cracked plaster
- Cracked and loose boards on entrances
- Replacement of broken drain spouts
- Replace hazardous cellar stairway
- Remove soot and debris from chimney
- Dispose of litter and debris from cellar
- Disconnect and cease use of extension cords passing through walls

These are examples of things to watch for.

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grass seed can make a patch of uninviting dirt a lovely lawn. A few flowers and some shrubs can markedly alter the appearance of a drab yard. All of these seemingly small things can add up to a large neighborhood beautifying job.

These indications of neighborhood pride cannot be compelled by law. No one can force us to do these little "extras." This is, however, our neighborhood. Renewal or no renewal, it will be only as nice as we want it to be. Even now during the snow of January it is not too early to begin to plan some of these spring projects which will help to make the Hill once more one of Portland's showplaces.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
Munjoy South Association



"This Is
Our School"

A School Is Born —

Not many children have the opportunity to take part in the building of their own school.

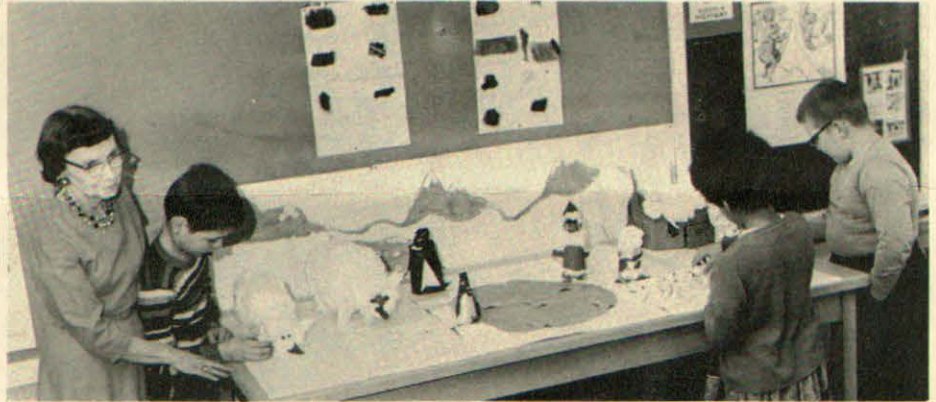
But this was the privilege of children who attended the old Monument School — now demolished — as they were invited to visit with the architects, Stevens and Saunders, to look over the plans for the new Marada F. Adams school. While munching cookies and drinking gingerale these youngsters had their first view of their new school as it was being born.

This opportunity also held true for the teachers, and one of their suggestions resulted in a different location for the Faculty Room in a more secluded area.

The pupils whose drawings were chosen to be cast into the concrete side of the new school are now students at Jack Junior High School. No one knows just whose drawings were used. In fact they were composites of all the drawings entered by the first three grades — all little tots. Like footprints cast in lasting memory by movie stars, these drawing-prints will ever represent the pupils who were in grades one through three at Monument in 1957.

Having been born with a feeling of ownership and participation, the Marada Adams school has ever since maintained that spirit of possession by each class. Activities carried out by the faculty add to this feeling — such as the trees planted on Arbor Day, one for each grade, and the pupils having earned the money to buy the trees.

There is seldom a move to mar the school and it would ill behoove any child to depart from this tradition. Because the entire student body proudly feels that "This is Our School" and every child strives to treat it tenderly.



Upper left: The combination gymnasium and auditorium serves many uses, most important of which are the opportunities for physical education and recreation for these growing children. The room also is helpful to the community for civic and social affairs; and it serves as meeting center for the PTA, Scouts, and Brownies. Lower, right: Teacher Elsie Gallagher praises the handwork of her pupils as they construct a winter scene.

Good Returns On A Good Investment

The purpose of presenting the various stories on the Marada Adams School in this issue of Portland Renewal Authority's newsletter — is to show graphically the returns on the effort which was behind the investment — related to Renewal.

Long sought was the replacement of the dilapidated century-old Monument School, which has now been removed. Equally long were the negotiations for a location and the area clearance and construction of the new \$310,000 eight-room school which was dedicated in memory of one of Portland's distinguished teachers.

That the travail was worthy of the effort, and that the obstacles were finally resolved is demonstration of the process of redevelopment.

Portland was the winner — and so were the taxpayers and neighborhood — in seeing the evolution which resulted in the City's contribution to the Munjoy South Renewal Project — a credit allowed by the Federal

Relocations Show Increase

During the month of December seven families realized successful relocation from the Munjoy-South area.

All went to standard units. Four were rentals and three were purchases. One rental and one purchase took place from Munjoy-South to Bayside Park.

All seven received satisfactory relocation payments. All were assisted in one way or another by a staff member of PRA. All have bettered themselves by finding more suitable living quarters.

As of January 1 the PRA has acquired thirty-two structures in this area.

government for the new school toward final project approval.

Where we stand today in this accomplishment, can be symbolic of equally important achievements in the future, for the Munjoy-South Renewal Project is now moving steadily forward.

Who's Who At School—

All of the faculty with one exception came to the school when it was first opened — and all are veterans of the Portland School system. Also, all of them are still continuing their academic studies, keeping abreast of modern trends in education.

This record of leadership gives the Munjoy South students a solid foundation upon which to build their young lives.

In the picture at right, starting at the foot of the stairs and going upward we present the following:

MRS. KATHERINE M. FOLAN, born in Portland, resides on Sheridan Street, was graduated from St. Joseph's College and Gorham State Teachers' College; earning her master's degree at University of Maine. Teaches grade 3, is principal of the school.

MRS. ELSIE B. GALLAGHER, native of Houlton, resides on Congress Street, is a graduate of Aroostook State Teachers' College and Gorham State Teachers' College. Special Class. Hobby: Art.

MRS. ORESA C. BOWERING, born in Portland, resides on Wilson Street, graduate of Gorham State Teachers' College. Hobby: marine life. (We hear that her pet turtle has traveled around the Gaspé and has a red stocking hung for Christmas!) Grade 3.

MRS. DOROTHY L. HATT, native of Cliff Island, Casco Bay; resides in Scarborough, graduate of Gorham State Teachers' College, and University of Maine. Grade 2.

MISS ANGELA M. WARD, born in Portland, resides on Ocean Avenue, graduate of Farmington State Teachers' College. Grade 2.

MRS. BARBARA W. SWITZER, born in Portland, resides in Falmouth, graduate of Wheaton College. Hobby: antiques. Grade 1.

MRS. SABINA M. WIEMERT, born in Portland, resides in South Portland, graduate of Farmington and Gorham State Teachers' Colleges, and earned masters degree at University of Maine. Grade 1.

MISS EDNA R. MORRILL, born in Somerville, Mass., resides on St. Lawrence St.; graduate of Leslie College, Cambridge, Mass. and Gorham State Teachers' College. Kindergarten.

The total years of service in Portland schools of these eight teachers comes to 174 years, ranging from 14 to 35 years.



The Faculty — Marada Adams School —

Who Was Marada F. Adams?

A "teacher whose name is practically synonymous with Munjoy Hill" was honored appropriately when the Marada F. Adams School was named.

An idea promoted by the Booster Club of the Hill caught on effectively and inspired letters from all over the country to the Portland School Board.

Miss Adams, a native of Houlton, held the record of longest continuous service of any teacher in the United States — seventy-two years to be exact — and was once so featured by Robert Ripley's Believe-It-or-Not syndicated column. She was principal of Emerson School for most of those years.

But more important than the length of her service was its quality, according to the many who recall her vividly today, and who were once her pupils.

The ability to combine discipline with warmth, and to teach much about the arts along with the abc's, is recalled. She was noted by her very strong and independent character, one example of which was her courage in wearing "bobbed hair" at a time when no other women did so.

Another recollection of her strength of purpose was in early teaching days in a small town where her predecessor had been thrown out the window into a snowbank. Miss Adams mastered the irrepressible students and was later invited to teach in the Academy.

History from Demolition

While speaking of the past, a note of interest was the appearance of a yellowed (or browned) newspaper, falling out of the walls of 22 Monument Street.

Demolitioner Serota brought carefully to the PRA office an almost powdered copy of the Evening Express of Wednesday, Nov. 15, 1882.

Proudly claiming to be "The Only One Cent Paper in the State," the paper was published at 55 Union Street by A. W. Laughlin, Proprietor.

The Portland Theater was booming and "Pink Dominos" was being presented by the Lingard company — although the reviewer said the "silly farce elicited all the applause it deserved."

The Lyceum drew a more favorable review. Famed poet Tennyson drew strong criticism for the failure of his new prose effort "The Promise of May."

Most interesting are the many medical ads and strange descriptions and promises of cures which would be run out of town today — fortunately!

Among those who paid tribute to her at the ceremonies dedicating "her" school were Mrs. Helen C. Andrew, a former pupil of hers, and chairman of the Portland School Committee. Dr. Perley J. Lessard was City Council chairman, and it was Robert W. Rowe of the Munjoy Hill Boosters who started the ball rolling.